

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 ORM-02 L-03 SP-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 IO-10

PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15 /072 W
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R 031447Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6410

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, SHUM, PINT, CVIS, CAASC

SUBJECT: AMNESTY OF PRISONERS

REFS: A) SANTIAGO 8693, B) SANTIAGO 8582, C) SANTIAGO 8161

1. SUMMARY: EXCEPT FOR 13 PERSONS WHO HAD BEEN INTERVIEWED FOR US PAROLE PROGRAM, NAMES ON LIST OF 50 PRISONERS AMNESTIED BY PINOCHET (RREF A) ARE NOT KNOWN TO EMBASSY. NONE OF DETAINED PEACE COMMITTEE ASSOCIATES IS ON LIST, ALTHOUGH FOUR OUT OF ORIGINAL NINE (REF C) ARE STILL DETAINED. GOC HAS NOW AMNESTIED 210 PERSONS (PLUS PRIESTS). WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT TWO RECENT AMNESTIES ARE HARBINGER OF POLICY CHANGE. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED LIST OF ADDITIONAL 50 PRISONERS AMNESTIED BY PRESIDENT PINOCHET NEW YEARS WEEK AND DOES NOT RECOGNIZE ANY US INTEREST CASES OTHER THAN PAROLE, OR NAMES OF POLITICAL IMPORTANCE. THIRTEEN HAD BEEN INTERVIEWED FOR US PAROLE PROGRAM. FOLLOWING SEVEN CASES WERE ACTIVE: JORGE AVALOS SALAZAR, TOMAS GAETE AGUIRRE, JUAN MATUS RAMIREZ, SAMUEL SOBARZO AGURTO, LUIS MIRANDA MIRANDA, CARLOS SOTO GARCIA AND SERGIO ABARCA CISTERNA. FOUR PERSONS ON LIST HAD BEEN REFUSED: JUA FLANDES OPORTO, JOSE GOMEZ CERDA, ROBERTO SANTELICES VILLALOBOS, AND RAFAEL RIVERA HERNANDEZ. TWO OTHERS WERE INACTIVE: ORLANDO
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MASON ZENTENO ACCEPTED VISA TO CANADA, AND CLAUDIO DURAN PARDO

DOES NOT WISH TO GO TO US.

3. LIST INCLUDE NO COMMITTEE FOR PEACE ASSOCIATES CURRENTLY DETAINED. EMBASSY NOTED RELEASE OF COMMITTEE WORKER MARIA LORETO PELISSIER (REF B IN CHRISTMAS LIST. COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY CRISTIAN PRECHT TOLD US DECEMBER 30 THAT COMMITTEE WORKED ALICIA MARIA HERMOSILLA (REF C) HAD ALSO BEEN RELEASED BUT HAD NOT BEEN ON FIRST AMNESTY LIST. LAWYERS JOSE ZALACU MO AND MARCUS DUFFAUT, AND BETTY WALKER AND GEORGINA OCARANZA ARE REMAINING COMMITTEE ASSOCIATES DETAINED OUT OF ORIGINAL NINE (REF C).

4. COMMENT: AMNESTY OF 210 PERSONS HELD UNDER STATE OF SIEGE AUTHORITY WAS AUSPICIOUS DEVELOPMENT, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT THE TWO END-OF-YEAR AMNESTIES INDICATE ANY CHANGE IN INTERNAL SECURITY POLICY. EMBASSY DOES NOT KNOW HOW MANY PERSONS REMAIN DETAINED WITHOUT CHARGE. LAST OFFICIAL DETENTION STATISTICS (SANTIAGO 6499) INDICATED THAT 209 PERSONS WERE BEING HELD WITHOUT CHARGE UNDER STATE OF SIEGE AUTHORITY (CATEGORY I) BUT HAD EXILE DECREES AS OF SEPTEMBER 17. ANOTHER APPROXIMATELY 338 CATEGORY I DETAINEES WOULD PRESUMABLY BE HELD INDEFINITELY WITHOUT TRIAL. RECENT AMNESTIES MAY REFLECT GOC DECISION TO BEGIN TO CLEAN OUT CATEGORY I, EXCEPT FOR THOSE CONSIDERED MOST DANGEROUS. FACT THAT 22 OF 210 AMNESTIED (EXCLUDING PRIESTS) HAD APPLIED FOR US PAROLE PROGRAM INDICATES THAT A LEAST A FAIR NUMBER OF PERSONS RELEASED HAD BEEN HELD FOR A CONSIDERABLE TIME.

5. ON OTHER HAND, WE HAVE HEARD COMMENTS THAT NUMBER OF DETENTIONS HAS INCREASED DURING PAST TWO MONTHS. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE, BUT IF THIS IS CORRECT, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CATEGORY I DETAINEES MAY NOT HAVE DECREASED AS MUCH AS MIGHT BE INITIALLY SUPPOSED FROM NUMBER OF PERSONS RELEASED.
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